



Press-Gazette photo

After 20 years on North Quincy Street, this Prange Way will close Tuesday and move into the East Town Shopping Center, where it will reopen Sept. 15.

Prange Way on N. Quincy to close; new store to open

The Prange Way discount store on North Quincy Street, operated by the H.C. Prange Co. for the past 20 years, will close Tuesday.

A new Prange Way store will open Sept. 15 in the East Town Shopping Center.

Dennis Van Dalen, manager of the North Quincy store, will become manager of the new one. Employees will transfer either to the new store or other Prange stores in Green Bay.

Stan Brenner, president of Prange Way Discount Stores, said it was anticipated that the North Quincy Store would be closed "when we decided to build at East Town."

The East Town shopping center is located on East Mason street east of Main Street. It also includes a Cub Food Store and a Kohl's Department Store. The East Town mall, operated by the Center Companies, will open in October.

Prange Way also operates discount stores at its main store downtown and at Green Bay Plaza on the west side.

The North Quincy store will be converted to a merchandise distribu-

tion center serving the entire Prange network of 40 stores.

Phil Hauck, corporate director of merchandise processing and distribution, said construction of a 10,000-square-foot addition will begin late this month with an opening scheduled for Feb. 1.

The building, which now has 100,000 square feet of space, will include 25 shipping and receiving docks.

Construction will be contracted to Quasius Bros. Construction Co., Sheboygan. Work is scheduled to begin later this month.

The decision means Prange's has canceled plans to build a distribution center in the Howard industrial park.

Last spring, Prange's closed a real estate transaction on the purchase of 30 acres of land for \$300,000. At the time, the company had planned to construct a facility up to 270,000 square feet on the site.

Hauck said the move of the Prange Way store from North Quincy to East Town cleared the way for conversion of the old store into a distribution center.

"We already owned the building

and the land, plus it is an excellent location in relation to highway and rail transportation," he said.

Prange's now operates a distribution center in Madison, which will be closed, and another in Ashwaubenon.

The Ashwaubenon center will continue as the entire company's distribution center for the processing of apparel goods. The 35,000-square-foot facility employs 30 to 80 persons during different periods of the year.

Prange's also distributes merchandise through a common-carrier facility in Milwaukee, which will be discontinued. Both the Milwaukee and Madison operations will be moved to Green Bay. Smaller-scale distribution has been conducted at nine other locations in the Prange system.

Hauck said channeling all merchandise through Green Bay will enable the company to make larger purchases at better prices. Merchandise also will move faster from manufacturers to the stores selling the goods, he said.

He anticipated another 125 persons will be employed at the new facility when it opens about Feb. 1.

22 Prange Ways to close

Chain of department stores files for bankruptcy

By Jeff Kleinhuizen
and Tom Murphy
Press-Gazette

DE PERE — Prange Way Inc., a discount department store chain, has laid off most of its corporate office employees and plans to close all of its 22 stores, a management employee said Friday.

The chain, headquartered in De Pere, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection on Friday afternoon in federal court in Milwaukee, said the source who asked to remain anonymous.

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The 22 Midwest Prange Way stores plan going-out-of-business sales and all will be closed by early next year, sources said. Green Bay has two Prange Way stores: one in East Town Mall at 2300 E. Mason St. and one in Plaza West at 1505 W. Mason St.

No store employees have been laid off yet, the source said.

Store employees said they didn't know when going-out-of-business sales would start in Green Bay. They said the stores would no longer take layaways or accept Prange Way credit

cards.

Signs in the east side store Friday also said the store will not accept film after Oct. 31.

Until 1990, Prange Way was the discount arm of the H.C. Prange Co. department store chain. Corporate management spun off the unit to managers.

On Sept. 5, Prange Way president Larry Sommer confirmed elimination of 25 positions because of "disappointing sales and to assure continued

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profitability."

But Sommer also said then that, "We bought the company in 1990 and we have shown a profit in every one of those years. We just want to assure that the trend continues."

Sommer has not returned phone calls.

Prange Way opened its leased 81,300-square-foot corporate headquarters and distribution center in the town of Lawrence in April 1991.

The parent Prange company itself fell on hard times in the early 1990s.

The department stores were sold to Younkers of Des Moines, Iowa, in 1992. The remaining Prange holding, 108 id stores, emerged from bankruptcy in late September. The women's boutique stores are now named American Specialty Corp.

A photograph of a large, single-story commercial building with a tan-colored wall. A central entrance is framed by a dark brown, vertically-slatted canopy. Above the entrance, a white rectangular sign with red lettering reads "PRANGE WAY". Several small, dark green trees are planted along the base of the building. In the foreground, a paved parking lot is visible, with a white shopping cart parked on the left and some scattered debris in the center. The sky is overcast with soft, pinkish-orange light from the setting or rising sun.

PRANGE WAY